

In the past 20 years, there has been tremendous change in the franchising industry, and as a result, I believe it is time for Congress to review the franchise rule and level the playing field for the thousands of small business owners who invest in franchise operations. The legislation that I introduce today, along with my distinguished colleague from Michigan, Congressman JOHN CONYERS, addresses the fundamental and necessary safeguards that this industry so desperately needs. I believe that the safeguards provided by this legislation level the playing field for small business franchisees across our nation. This legislation, like the Automobile Dealers Day in Court Act and the Petroleum Marketing Practices Act, rights the imbalance that has existed for too long in the franchisor/franchisee relationship.

Recognizing that it is too late to act on this legislation during the 105th Congress, I am hopeful that the 106th Congress will address this matter and ensure that this important segment of the small business world will remain viable for future generations.

WAIVING REQUIREMENT OF
CLAUSE 4(b) OF RULE XI WITH
RESPECT TO CONSIDERATION OF
CERTAIN RESOLUTIONS RE-
PORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON
RULES

SPEECH OF

HON. LOUIS STOKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Saturday, October 10, 1998

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the martial law resolution, H. Res. 589. This measure waves the one-day layover requirement, guaranteed by House rules, and allows any appropriations bill, appropriations conference report or continuing resolution to be brought to the floor for a vote—today and for the remainder of the 105th Congress. This is yet another attempt by the Republican majority to prevent critical Democratic proposals from being brought to the floor for consideration.

In spite of the fact that the fiscal year is over, the Republican Congress has failed to complete the regular business of the House, including: Passing a budget resolution and concluding action on several appropriations bills.

Rather than legislating, House Republicans have focused their efforts on investigating. In fact, over the last four years, House Republicans have spent more than \$17 million on more than 50 politically-motivated investigations in the House. They have shown very little interest in creating positive legislative accomplishments that would benefit our Nation's working families. And, they have wasted valuable time on promoting excessively partisan issues.

Earlier this year, congressional Democrats joined the administration in introducing a comprehensive education proposal—which includes school modernization and class size reduction initiatives. These efforts are critical to ensuring that students across the United States are prepared for the twenty-first century. However, House Republicans have continuously blocked this legislation from being

considered on the floor. Instead, they have supported anti-public school initiatives such as school vouchers and budget cuts in essential education funding.

Mr. Speaker, recent polls indicate that the American voters are primarily concerned with improving public education in this country. However, the Republican 105th Congress has failed to act on legislation that would help to improve our Nation's public schools. School modernization and class size reduction legislation is vital to enabling local school districts to renovate and modernize their existing facilities as well as to build new classrooms that will enable them to effectively address rising school enrollments.

According to the General Accounting Office, our neighborhood schools are sorely in need of \$112 billion to repair or upgrade dangerous and substandard school facilities. In fact, 60 percent of the Nation's public schools have at least one major building feature in complete disrepair.

Before the 105th Congress adjourns, we must work to address these and other problems associated with critical funding needs for school modernization and class size reduction. The Democratic education proposal provides Federal tax credits to pay the interest on \$22 billion in bonds for the modernization or construction of more than 5,000 schools across the country. It also assists local school districts in hiring an additional 100,000 qualified teachers and reduce class size in grades one through three. At a time when the Nation's public schools are experiencing record school enrollment, and many teachers in the early grades have classes at large as 36 students, this effort is absolutely essential.

It is for these reasons that I urge my colleagues to join me in opposing the martial law resolution. It is time to stop playing games. We must get to work and enact legislation that will benefit all of our Nation's children and ensure that they have access to quality public school education.

Vote no on H. Res. 589

AGRICULTURE'S UNFINISHED
BUSINESS

HON. JERRY MORAN

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 14, 1998

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of America's farmers and ranchers. Agricultural producers make up only two-percent of the U.S. population, yet they are productive and efficient enough to safely and inexpensively feed this country and much of the rest of the world. Our agricultural production system is the envy of the world, but we cannot take it for granted.

Mr. Speaker, farmers and ranchers work hard for us. Tonight I call on Congress and the President to return the favor.

Agriculture is different than other U.S. industries. It is a sector that is at the whims of both government policies and the global economy. Unfortunately, neither one of these influences are controlled by the Kansas farmer. The collapse of the Asian economy has beaten down prices like a hailstorm ripping across the Kansas plains. According to the U.S. Treasury Department, Kansas' agricultural exports to Asia

have fallen by 20%. Through no fault of their own, Kansas farmers will miss out on over \$2 billion in farm income due to lost markets and low prices. We need to take action, not just for today, but for the next generation.

In the short-term, the most important issues is the disaster relief bill for agriculture. This bill passed both the House and Senate, only to be vetoed by the President. The passage of this legislation could not be more timely or important. The price decline, combined with the weather and transportation problems, has left many farmers and ranchers in dire straits. Congress and the President need to put aside their differences to pass a meaningful relief bill.

In the long-term, removing sanctions and foreign subsidies must be a to priority for Congress. I am pleased that a bill to limit agriculture embargoes has passed the House. This bill should be approved by the Senate and sent to the President for him to sign into law. Congress should then focus on repealing sanctions that currently damage our producers and work to ensure that new sanctions are done only as a measure of last resort, and not a knee-jerk reaction to the problem of the day. If this is going to be a global agricultural economy, we in the U.S. have to give our farmers a chance to sell and market around the globe.

Subsidies must also be addressed. The Export Enhancement Program, one of our only programs available to promote agriculture exports, has been left unused since I arrived in exports, an increase of 300%. The U.S. is still being out spent by nearly \$7 billion by the European Union. To do nothing is the worst response possible. We cannot afford to stand by while our competitors take away markets by using aggressive government subsidies.

Mr. Speaker, we owe a lot to the American farmer. Working together on their behalf is the least we can do. It is time to act.

THE NORTHWEST SALMON
RECOVERY ACT OF 1998

HON. ELIZABETH FURSE

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 14, 1998

Ms. FURSE. Mr. Speaker, as the entire country knows, the Pacific Northwest enjoys significant benefits from federal power through the Bonneville Power Administration. As I have advocated throughout my career, the Northwest also needs to be able to meet all of the public obligations associated with these benefits, including restoring fish and wildlife, meeting tribal treaty and trust obligations, and paying the U.S. Treasury.

I come to the floor today to introduce legislation that will give the Northwest region new tools to deal with anticipated changes in the utility industry, and new tools to promote salmon recovery and renewables conservation.

This bill, the Northwest Salmon Recovery Act of 1998, includes the following provisions to help the region get on track with its conservation responsibilities:

First, a Unified Plan for Fish and Wildlife. Under this bill, the Secretary of the Interior will be responsible for overseeing the development of a unified plan for salmon recovery in the Pacific Northwest. The plan will have as its